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ABSTRACT

Programs which lead to licensing and certification of social studies teachers should be based upon standards and curriculum set by social studies educators instead of social scientists. Reluctance of social scientists to work cooperatively with social studies educators is based largely upon the inability of social studies professionals to define their own field and upon the structure of the discipline orientation of most social scientists. The paper defines what social studies professionals think social studies ought to be, based upon their preference for one of three traditions as described by Barth and Shermis: (1) citizenship transmission based upon social science knowledge; (2) social studies as social sciences simplified for pedagogical purposes; and (3) reflective inquiry into social conflict through discussion and argument. The paper then defines what teachers of social studies think social studies is, based upon their philosophical attitudes towards the teaching profession, their conception of the teacher's role in the classroom, and their psychological ability to accept new ideas, such as inquiry training. The conclusion is that leaders in social studies education have the responsibility of defining social studies and establishing social studies education as a profession not totally dominated by social scientists in areas of content, objectives, and training. (Author/DB)

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SOCIAL SCIENCE COURSES FOR FUTURE TEACHERS: THE CONFLICT BETWEEN EDUCATION AND THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

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SOCIAL SCIENCE COURSES FOR FUTURE TEACHERS:
THE CONFLICT BETWEEN EDUCATION AND THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

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The conflict between social studies educators and social scientists has existed for several decades. The conflict has contributed to the status of the social studies which is, at present, unclear, ill-defined, and at a low level of prestige. There might be several reasons for the apparent reluctance between the two groups to work cooperatively, but two seem to stand out.

First, social studies educators have had and continue to have a difficult time in defining their own field. Social scientists can say, with justification, that social studies educators and curriculum specialists have not yet developed a cohesive structure which could describe social studies.

Secondly, the social scientists from various fields are rather autonomous and control their own curricula, set their own standards, and grant their own degrees. They are organized as self-contained entities, primarily concerned with the training of students who have decided to major in their particular disciplines. Given the structure of the university accounting and credit-delivery systems, with all that entails, inter-departmental or interdisciplinary curriculum planning is discouraged. It is difficult, therefore, for social scientists from different disciplines to co- or team-teach courses so that students may

benefit from the backgrounds and perspectives of more than one discipline at a time. So, although conflict may not exist among the scholars of the various social sciences, distance and non-cooperation does, at least in significant numbers of institutions. If communication and cooperation among the social science disciplines is difficult to achieve within an administrative and curriculum unit, it is unreasonable to expect that it could exist between the schools and colleges of the universities.

Peripherally, at least, is a third reason which is undocumented, yet nevertheless felt by social studies educators, and that is that they are viewed by social scientists as generalists, without claim to recognized scholarly mastery of any of the social sciences.

We will deal briefly with the definitional problem, realizing that the recent Barr, Barth, and Shermis Bulletin[1] goes into greater depth. It should be understood that my remarks are influenced by my own experiences in the field of social studies. I entered the profession in 1957 having received a degree and certification in social studies. I had never heard of Larry Metcalf, Shirley Engle, Edgar Wesley, Stan Wronski, Jean Fair or anybody else involved in social studies education. I was, I believed, a history and government teacher. In 1963 I attended my first NCSS Conference in Los Angeles, and thus began my education.

During the remainder of the fifteen years I spent in secondary classrooms, I was involved with several projects, attended and even organized countless workshops in inquiry, decision-making, curriculum development, and strategies. I wish to make the point that during the decade of New Social Studies I was, as we say, "in the trenches."

For the past five years I have been involved in the training of social studies teachers. I am, as we say, "up a tree." The definitional problem has helped put me there. It is a serious problem to the scholars who have been struggling with it in print for many years. I believe it is far more serious a problem for social studies teachers and teacher educators who have the responsibility of putting some sort of structure into practice. But what structure? Why, after several decades of defining and re-defining the social studies are we seemingly no closer to a universally accepted definition?

I think that those defining social studies are telling us what ought to be and the teachers, by the nature of what they do and how they do it are telling us what social studies is, at least for them. Those who are telling us what ought to be are themselves not in agreement. We will discuss the positions of two opposing groups of theoretical definers - those telling us what social studies ought to be; social scientists who would organize social studies around the structures of the social sciencs disciplines and social studies educators who would organize social studies around reflective inquiry. We will also describe two teacher characteristics -- educational philosophy and degree of closed-mindedness which help to explain what social studies is to the practitioner.

Defining Social Studies: What it Ought to Be

1. Social Scientists

Because there has been little agreement among leaders in the field about what social studies is or are, it was possible for the Learned

Societies and individuals to get proposals funded so they could join the New Social Studies Club and thus contribute their own definitions to satisfy their own needs. As Barr, Barth, and Shermis[2] point out, social scientists embraced Bruner's oft-quoted statement that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development"[3] which was identified as the structures of the disciplines approach. To the social science scholars social science education had as much validity as the "life-experience", issues-oriented, problem-solving curriculum that had been identified as social studies since Dewey. The social scientists who were funded to develop projects could say, in effect "this is what social studies ought to be, because I say so, and because USOE has given me $100,000 to show you what I mean." Most of the social scientists who developed curriculum could be identified rather clearly as subscribing to one of the three social studies traditions as described by Barth and Shermis first in 1970[4] and again with Barr in 1977.

The three traditions are of course, Citizenship Transmission, Social Studies as Social Science, and Reflective Inquiry. Although there are many curricular examples of the Citizenship Transmission tradition, I do not believe any such projects were produced under the rubric of NSS nor developed with public funds. Nevertheless, it is the product of social scientists that the transmitters select as their instructional vehicles. A stroll through the exhibit hall at this conference will emphasize the popularity of the transmission approach.

Many of the developed projects fall into the Social Studies as Social Science tradition. They are, for the most part, the structure of the disciplines projects. For example, as early as 1965 Fenton and Good, in a report of the various USOE projects making up Project Social Studies at the mid-1960's said "In the courses being designed, students would organize knowledge as historians, geographers, political scientists, economists, anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists organize it."[5] A year later Fenton reported that most of the projects had adopted the structure of the disciplines as the major criterion for the selection of content in the social studies.[6] Of the twenty-six projects reviewed by Sanders and Tanck in 1970, one-half were built around the structure of single disciplines.

So while the single discipline projects were being developed there were rumblings of discontent from social studies educators. Johns indicated that teaching the structure of the social sciences would not help students come to grips with the value conflicts which underlie personal and social problems[7] and Eulie claimed that empirical, descriptive studies could only describe what is but cannot prescribe what ought to be, and that because the structures of the disciplines are treated in a descriptive manner, he said, social studies has been particularly guilty of being irrelevant-- there is a lack of contact with the real world.[8]

Shaver saw the projects as not only social science based, but said the academicians directing the projects were too often "scholacentric" in that they found it difficult to admit the importance of other fields of study, the necessity of justifying study of their own field, or the

possibility of alternative orderings of concepts from their own disciplines.[9] Engle believed the single discipline projects were primarily concerned with updating and improving the teaching of the social sciences. He observed that almost none of the projects had been concerned with improving the comprehensive education of citizens.[10] Newmann, during the same period, questioned seriously whether the social science disciplines had a legitimate place in education. He saw social scene education as no more than vocation training for success in college or the academic professions.[11]

It is obvious that there has been concern from the beginning of Project Social Studies that whatever gains had been made since Hunt and Metcalf said social studies programs should be organized around the "closed areas" of our society and not around separate social science disciplines[12] could be eroded by the single discipline, social science domination of the field. And there is no doubt that social scientists have dominated social studies, it is also true that many are uncomfortable even uttering the phrase "social studies."

2. Reflective Inquirers

While the large majority of projects were in the Social Studies as Social Science Tradition a few contemporary curriculum developers were working in the Reflective Inquiry Tradition. The two notable projects were the Harvard Social Studies Project developed by Oliver, Shaver, and Newmann, and the Analysis of Public Issues Curriculum, developed by Shaver and Larkins. The most broadly stated objective of that program

was to train students to examine and analyze, through discussion and argument, the kinds of disputes that give birth to social conflict. Students would hopefully gain certain powers of analysis that would aid them in discussing value dilemmas on which public controversy thrives.[13]

Oliver listed three major objectives of a curriculum centered around public controversy. They are that students should be taught to (1) recognize and define areas of human conflict, (2) define alternative methods of regulating human affairs that are possible from the point of view of major value positions in a society, and (3) make thoughtful predictions about the consequences of the various alternative methods of regulating human affairs. Oliver saw that through these objectives young people would be introduced "into the fire and controversy that rage within a free society."[14]

The overriding assumption in the design of the latter project was that social studies "is that part of the general education program which is concerned with the preparation of citizens for participation in a democratic society."[15] Later, Shaver predicted "once that definition is accepted, curriculum mandates can no longer come directly from the scholar attuned to his own discipline, but must be based on a consideration of the nature of the society which general education is to serve."[16]

That definition, stated in 1969, has not been accepted by more than a small number of teachers and social studies specialists and the curriculum mandates still come directly from social science scholars, through their dominance in developed projects and textbooks and their

virtually exclusive domain in teaching their disciplines in their own ways to prospective and in-service social studies teachers.

To summarize the first factor which has contributed to confusion about what social studies is or are, I would say that of the three traditions as defined, each has adherents for their own purposes and reasons. The transmitters are quietly practicing their art, the reflective inquirers are busily developing theirs, and the structures of the disciplines people have captured the field because they already had structures well know to them which could be quickly simplified for pedagogical purposes.

The transmitters were and are identifying and getting across to students the "right" values they should hold in order to practice good citizenship. The social scientists take what they believe to be a "value-free" or "value neutral" position and rely upon the students to make their own value preferences after they have gained the knowledge of the discipline. A goal of the Social Studies as Social Science Tradition is to train students in the discipline process so they may understand how to acquire additional content as they recognize the need, in order to make future value preferences. The Reflective Inquirers want primarily to prepare students for participation in a democratic society (as do adherents of all the traditions). But, they argue, students must be trained in the process of rational decision-making in order to be able to choose what they prefer.

In terms of impact and influence in social studies, I do not believe the Citizenship Transmission tradition is associated closely with

social studies education from a definitional viewpoint. That is, I have not heard anybody who is currently attempting to give direction to the field claim that the goal of the social studies is to transmit 'right' values so that students might become 'good' citizens.

The definitional argument really goes on between the social scientists who have been attracted to the field for their own reasons, and the reflective inquirers, who believe they have defined social studies as a separate discipline. Whether or not that is true will be known when this question is resolved: Is the goal of social studies to teach the structure of the disciplines, or is it to prepare citizens for participation in a democratic society through the process of rational decision-making? Before we attempt to determine what social studies ought to be, we should look at the social studies teacher, the practitioner, the person who is engaged in what to him is social studies.

Defining Social Studies: What It Is

The second factor which contributes to the present status of the social studies is the practitioner. When we say there is no universally accepted definition, we are not saying that social studies people operate without clear objectives in mind. The lack of universality is attributed to disagrement about what the goals are and how they should be achieved. Most social studies teachers can give their own definitions, and moreover, demonstrate that they operate within the parameters of those definitions. Barr, Barth and Shermis suggest that a large majority of social studies teachers are transmitters of knowledge. We will look at two measurable characteristics of teachers to determine why this

is so, and why they do not become more involved with inquiry models to achieve their objectives.

In 1969 I raised the question: Why are the inquiry, issue oriented projects being rejected by significant numbers of teachers? I did not know with certainty whether they were, but I had spent several years involved with teachers in in-service workshops, summer institutes, and curriculum projects, and from the limited sample with whom I worked, I was convinced that most had rejected the materials that were inquiry oriented. Materials would be introduced, strategy sessions would be held, materials purchased. Usually, within a month of getting such materials, the teacher would send them back to the book room. In conversations with other curriculum workers, from other districts and other states, I learned they were having similar results. None of us were sure why some of the most exciting materials to have been produced were being rejected by large numbers of teachers who claimed they were ready to get away from the confining textbooks.

I examined several projects and concluded that most of the materials had been designed around assumptions about the teachers who would use them, and that their adoption and successful use might well have depended upon the validity of those assumptions, two of which were:

1. Teachers are in philosophical agreement with the rationales, strategies and content of the project.
2. Teachers are open-minded, and therefore receptive to change.

The first assumption, that teachers were in philosophical agreement with the goals of the project was apparently held by many project developers. The manuals, which included suggested activities, examples of modes of inquiry which could be employed to illustrate particular concepts and generate discussions said little, if anything about the attitudes the teacher should have concerning his role in the classroom. He was shown how to direct an inquiry lesson and it was assumed he would behave as suggested. Yet, if that teacher possessed an educational philosophy which dictated that he be a purveyor of a prescribed body of data, there was a strong likelihood he would reject, or at least find difficult to use, the strategies the developers had built into their programs.

Teacher Philosophy

The teachers' philosophy of education has been traditionally defined as the beliefs and values he holds about education--his role, and the role of the learner. Even with the carefully defined teaching suggestions described in many of the projects, the teachers' philosophy is likely to exert considerable influence on his teaching behavior, and therefore on the outcomes obtained with the materials he is asked to use. From the several studies of teacher characteristics and educational philosophy over the past fifty years, it is generally agreed that educational philosophy can be described basically along two dimensions--traditional and progressive.

The "traditional" teacher is characterized as holding a narrow

educational viewpoint, emphasizing subject matter mastery, and teaching his students what he believes they should know. That teacher might be more comfortable in the Citizenship Transmission Tradition. The progressive teacher emphasizes problem solving education based upon children's interests and needs, and education as an instrument of change.[17] That description generally applies to the teacher who is able to utilize effectively the strategies of inquiry-oriented programs.

Teacher Dogmatism

The second assumption, that teachers are open-minded, and therefore receptive to change, indicates willingness on the part of the teacher to modify his teaching behavior. Conversely, teachers are more likely to reject new information and teaching strategies if they are closed-minded, or dogmatic.

In a study conducted in 1971[18] we employed educational philosophy[19] and dogmatism[20] scales with 222 secondary social studies teachers to determine their general educational philosophies and their degree of open or closed-mindedness. The range on the philosophy scale was 0 to 96 with 0 being traditional and 96 being progressive. The mean for our sample was 60.5. On the dogmatism scale with a range of 20 to 140, the mean score was 51.7, which was in the direction of closed-mindedness. We found a high correlation existed between teachers' scores on the dogmatism and philosophy scales, which supported the hypothesis that dogmatic or closedminded teachers would subscribe to a traditional educational philosophy.

Frymier's contention added weight to our findings. He believes

new concepts, techniques, and media are only useful to those who are psychologically capable of perceiving the proposed educational changes. He further stated, 'If the teachers are defensive, closed, inadequate, and fearful, they will not be able to get the new idea 'inside' their central nervous systems to give it new meaning for them. Unless they can do this, the innovation can only be utilized mechancially and unthinkingly, or not at all. [21]

Frymier's statement helps explain what we have all seen in teacher behavior. Defensive, closed, inadequate, and fearful are adjectives that generally describe attitudes displayed by teachers at in-service workshops, at curriculum planning meetings, and whenever new programs are proposed or introduced. It is no wonder, therefore, that many teachers find it difficult to get new ideas 'inside' their central nervous systems. Making extreme position shifts is difficult, given the psychological makeup.

But regardless of the teachers' degree of closed-mindedness or educational philosophy, they do define their jobs as social studies teachers. Those who are closed-minded cannot accept definitions and behaviors imposed upon them, particularly if they are far different from those previously learned and accepted. It seems reasonable to assume that a teacher could more easily move from the Tradition of Citizenship Transmission to Social Science Structures than from Citizenship Transmission to the Reflective Inquiry Tradition. Many were able to do that, and today make excellent use of the various single discipline projects. Thousands of teachers have in fact returned to Universities to take

additional course work in history, political science, sociology and other social sciences to become more attuned to those disciplines in order to be more effective in teaching the disciplines through the project materials they have adopted.

They have become more expert at having their students learn about and respect certain of the social sciences. They are providing vocational education in social science. But what most of those teachers do not do is involve students in examining the important issues of the day, or help them to make important decisions about how they will live their lives and what they will believe. And, significantly, the social studies teacher is enrolling in graduate social science courses to help him become a better teacher rather than in graduate social studies education courses.

To summarize the second factor which mitigates against a universally accepted definition of what social studies <u>is</u>, it appears that the project developers, both the structure of the discipline people and the reflective inquirers, who were defining what social studies ought to be, made assumptions about teacher behaviors that were not valid.

Because of the psychological and philosophical nature of teachers, far many more who were willing or able to change at all, moved from the Citizenship Transmission Tradition to the Social Studies as Social Science Tradition, leaving extremely small numbers of teachers who would define social studies by their <u>preferences and behaviors</u> as Reflective Inquiry.

The Conflict: Social Studies Education Vs. Colleges of Arts and Sciences

Where does this put social studies educators, who must be recognized as having some influence on the teaching styles and curriculum strategy preferences of future teachers? If we accept the notion that significant changes in what social studies is can only take place in the classroom, how do teacher trainers proceed to prepare teachers to bring about change? Given the current status of social studies education as practiced by significant numbers of teachers, perhaps we should ask the question!

Is it not reasonable for those charged with the responsibility of advancing the progessional competencies of their students to determine the kinds of training they should receive?

That question brings us to the major thrust of this paper, an examination of the conflict between Social Studies Educators and the Social Sciences, or more broadly between Schools of Education and Colleges of Arts and Sciences. I am unaware of the existence of any study which could support or refute the following statement. Yet, based upon my own experiences and in discussions with colleagues from every section of the country, I make it with a reasonable degree of confidence. Social studies educators have little influence with or support from social science faculties in their efforts to have prospective teachers develop skills in processing information; examining values, beliefs, and attitudes; and social participation. This is not to say that individual faculty members are not interested. There are obviously many social

scientists, throughout the country, who work closely with social studies staff members, at both the university and pre-collegiate levels. Conceding that, the statement still carries weight. It is far too common to learn that a sociologist, an historian, a political scientist, who involves himself with teaching social studies methods, or supervision of student teachers, is given little credit for such activities when his work is being evaluated for retention or promotion within his own institution. In some places such association is a virtual guarantee that the professor will be required to seek employment elsewhere.

It has already been established that the social studies are dominated by the social sciences in terms of content and goals. I also contend that the social sciences have significant influence over the kind of training prospective social studies teachers will receive.

To the question I raised rhetorically a moment ago, I would answer yes. As a trainer of teachers I should determine the kind of training they receive. But in reality, my influence is very limited, as is the influence of most social studies teacher trainers around the country.

In establishing a teacher training program within Schools of Education we are permitted to do the following:

1. Establish a limited number of education courses required of our candidates. Typically these include:
   a. Introductory courses with a field component, such as tutoring or observing in public schools.
   b. Educational psychology.

c. Sociology of education.

d. Methods in the teaching field.

2. Establish a core of social science courses our candidates must complete prior to student teaching. Usually this includes a minimum number of hours in American and European history, American government, and a concentration in one or more of the remaining social sciences.

Even in teacher preparation programs which require two or more field experiences and additional work in social studies education such as curriculum development, public issues, decision making, and discussion techniques, most of the academic training for the student is completed under the guidance of social science faculties which for the most part are not in communication with Schools of Education faculty.

Most social science instructors make no distinction in their courses between those students majoring in their particular discipline, those enrolled in their courses to complete general education requirements, and prospective social studies teachers who will receive not only a degree granted through the College of Arts and Sciences, but a professional license to teach, granted with the recommendation of the faculty in the School of Education.

In effect, one College within the University is able to exert considerable influence over the programming efforts of another college. And as long as social studies educators are forced to rely upon the social sciences for the academic preparation of their candidates, social

studies will be, in practice, the social sciences simplified for pedagogical purposes.

Several years ago NCSS published a position paper entitled Standards for Social Studies. The paper specified what ought to be a typical professional education component for prospective teachers and it described the minimum preparation for teacher trainers among other things. Those Standards are currently undergoing revision. An obvious purpose of a set of Standards issued by a recognized professional society is to enhance the integrity of the profession. I suspect that in Colleges of Arts and Sciences around the country, the fact that social studies candidates prepare for professional degrees, escapes some social scientists.

I know of no other professional programs, leading to licensing and certification that gives over as much of the professional education to other departments or divisions of a University as does Education.. If social studies is to be significantly involved in preparing students to become rational decision-makers in a socio-political context,wherein students learn the skills of inquiry to make choices and deliberate decisions that help them live effective productive lives in a democratic society, the leaders in social studies education, those who can influence policy, must deliberately and quickly move toward the establishment of social studies education as a profession.

Once that is established, the social sciences can make great contributions toward the academic preparation of prospective teachers. For,

once established, Social Scientists in the various disciplines can serve but can no longer control social studies.

Finally, regardless of what we think social studies ought to be, the percentages of social studies candidates who would apply for either of the following social studies positions might tell us what social studies <u>is</u> today.

<u>Wanted: Social Studies Teacher</u>.

Must be prepared to teach those aspects of history economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, psychology, geography, and philosophy which in practice are selected for instructional purposes in schools and colleges.

Must develop and demonstrate a sensitivity to community attitudes.

Major Responsibilities:

1. Help to develop students' ability to apply skills of rational inquiry in making and understanding social decisions.
2. Help students examine reflectively issues in closed areas of American culture.
3. Help students identify, clarify, and test ideas generated by their understanding that our culture is marked by rapid change and pluralism.

Wanted: Social Studies Teacher.

Grades 9-12. American history, government, social problems (1 section). Must be able to coach a major boys' sport.

Footnotes

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4. J.L. Barth and S.S. Shermis, "Defining the Social Studies: An Exploration of Three Traditions." Social Education, 34 (November, 1970), pp. 742-754.

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14. D.W. Oliver & J.B. Shaver, Teaching Public Issues in the High School, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), p. 107.

15. J.P. Shaver, op cit., 1967, p. 589.

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19. R.L. Curran, I.J. Gordon, and J.F. Doyle. "A Short Test of One's Educational Philosophy," Educational and Psychological Measurement 26 (1966), p. 383-393.

20. V.C. Troldahl and F. Powell, "A Short-Form Dogmatism Scale for Use in Field Studies," Social Forces 44 (1965) pp. 211-214.

21. J.R. Frymier, "Teachers: Not Will But Can They Change?" Strategies for Educational Change Newsletter (The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1968), microfiche 24-648.